



## NEWS RELEASE

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## Two Charged With Forgery, Grand Theft in Engineering Fraud Case

Two men have been charged in a 487-count complaint alleging they falsified documents and provided fraudulent engineering services for more than seven years, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Wilfrido Rodriguez (dob 1/24/72) of Downey and Ruben Gutierrez (dob 5/8/74) of Huntington Beach each face multiple counts of forgery, identity theft and grand theft. They are expected to be arraigned today in Department 30 of the Foltz Criminal Justice Center.

The case was filed for warrant on Feb. 27.

Deputy District Attorney Jeffrey Stodel of the White Collar Crime Division is prosecuting the case.

Rodriguez was an engineering drafter and Gutierrez was an architectural designer at Palos Verdes Engineering. Neither Rodriguez nor Gutierrez were licensed architects or civil engineers.

Between 2007 and 2014, the defendants are accused of forging the signature of one of the licensed civil engineers that owns Palos Verdes Engineering. In addition, both men allegedly used the victim's engineering seal in order to deceive homeowners and municipalities into believing that the victim had personally drafted the engineering plans and conducted the required site inspections.

The victim did not review or approve any of the engineering plans allegedly created and submitted by the defendants and did not authorize Rodriguez and Gutierrez to use his seal, the prosecutor said.

Investigators estimate that there were more than 700 residential and commercial properties where fraud allegedly occurred in more than 50 cities in Southern California.

If convicted as charged, Rodriguez faces up to 152 years in state prison, while Gutierrez faces a possible maximum sentence of 105 years in prison.

Case BA465793 remains under investigation by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Fraud and Cyber Crimes Bureau.

### **[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)**

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.